News release

Aviators to see a change in the weather

15 February 2006

A change to the way the private pilots receive their weather forecasts is on the way.

The new charts - to be issued from 14 March 2006 - will enhance the service provided by the Met Office to the aviation community. The change will offer new and improved UK and European low-level, significant weather information. The charts have been designed following extensive consultation with private pilots, and have the backing of the Civil Aviation Authority.

The revisions include:

- a new landscape layout in full colour, that is easy to print but still shows high definition in black and white;
- using the same codes as in the METAR code, for simplicity and consistency;
- a change to the issue time and validity periods, in order to ensure consistency across all low level charts. Pilots flying all day will benefit from being able to access a single chart providing a forecast valid from 0800 to 1700; this will be available from early morning;
- the outlook pressure and front charts for the end of the forecast period will no longer appear on the chart, but will be available separately on the Met Office website.

Charts providing vertical wind and temperature data will also have their validity times changed to be consistent with the significant weather charts, to further improve the documentation.

A fuller description of the changes is available on the Met Office web site.

Notes to editors

The significant weather charts are F215 for UK and F415 for Europe
Upper wind charts are F214 and F414 respectively

Details of the chart changes
Samples of the new charts can be seen online.

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